

THE
CATHOLIC CLERGY OF IRELAND:
THEIR CAUSE DEFENDED,
IN A
SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF BUCKINGHAM,

ON THURSDAY, JANUARY VII, MDCCCXXXVI.

BY THE REV.

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ADVERTISEMENT

SERMON

The following sermon was delivered at the request of those who heard it. It may, however, be proper to state that some observations made subsequently at a meeting held in County in behalf of the Irish Clergy, have been embodied in the Discourse.

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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

AND OF THE SOCIETY OF THE APOSTOLIC PRELATES

LONDON

PUBLISHED FOR A. & C. WINDGATE

AT THE CHURCH LANE

AND WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON

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SERMON
ADVERTISEMENT

" From the Catholic Church, the Romish Church, which he
accounteth Catholic, hath varied and *dissented* many years past,
as the blindest that this day do live, may well see and perceive,
if they will not purposely wink and shut their eyes."

CRANMER.

" Threats which the unthinking only can despise,
Perplex the Church ; but be thou firm, be true
To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,
Poor as thou art."

WORDSWORTH.

A

SERMON,

&c.

Acts xi. 29, 30.

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

OUR text refers to the very first collection that ever was made in the Christian Church for a charitable purpose. From that day to this eighteen hundred years have passed away, and have become to us as the years before the flood; yet, in all those eighteen hundred years, it may be doubted whether any appeal has ever been made to Christian benevolence more worthy of attention than that which, at the present time, awakens the sympathies of our countrymen, and which will not, I trust, be made in vain to the congregation I now address. In soliciting your contributions for the relief of the Irish Clergy, an appeal is

made in behalf of your starving fellow-creatures, and to such an appeal whose is the heart that refuses to respond? An appeal is made to you in behalf of your fellow Christians, and if you are ready to do good to all men, where is the Christian heart which is not especially ready to do good to them that are of the household of faith? An appeal is made to you in behalf of those ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God, who, however they may be thought scorn of by the profligate and profane, will always by the true Christian be esteemed very highly in love, for their works' sake; an appeal is made to you, always calculated to quicken the throbbings of a really English heart, in behalf of men suffering under persecution,—and persecution for what? simply for believing as you believe, and for teaching as you are taught.

It has been the misfortune of Ireland from an early period, to be the arena of contending factions¹. It was owing to the violence of contending factions that Henry II. first gained a footing in that island,—it was owing to the existence of these factions that all the measures of the English

¹ That the great source of Irish misery has been not the power of England, but its *want* of power, to put down the various factions of that country, is very ably shown by Dr. Phelan, in his "History of the Policy of the Church of Rome in Ireland."

government (especially the wise and benevolent designs of the first James) for the welfare of the people, were rendered abortive; it was owing to the existence of powerful factions, and of chiefs exercising power little short of despotic, that the greater part of that country (all except what was included within the English pale) was for so long a period not misgoverned but perfectly lawless. Of late years, all these rival factions have mingled their discordant elements into one harmonious whole, and having combined against the Church of their forefathers, have had recourse to every art the most refined policy could suggest, to effect its overthrow as an establishment. The mode of attack has varied according to circumstances, but still it has been systematic. At one time there were spread abroad the most exaggerated statements as to its enormous wealth, for the double purpose of gaining to the side of its enemies those who hoped to share in its spoils, and of exciting the envy, hatred, and malice of others who wish to see the pastors of a wealthy country reduced to beggary, in order to bring religion into contempt; and referring to the poverty of the twelve Apostles, forget that the laymen, at the period to which they allude, instead of consecrating a *portion* of their goods for the maintenance of God's service and his ministers, brought *all* their wealth and laid it at the Apostles' feet. This report

of the Church's wealth, the present appeal to your benevolence sufficiently disproves ; for if the incomes of the clergy had been what they were represented to be, it is not possible that they could have been reduced, in the course of a few years, to their present destitution. But the strongest contradiction may be found in the Parliamentary documents, from which it appears that if the property of the Church were equally divided among the clergy, it would give to each very little more than 225*l.* a year¹; no very exorbitant sum for those who before they can be ordained must receive an expensive education ; no very exorbitant sum for the maintenance of those who are commanded by Scripture (which in delivering the command presupposes their future competence) to be given to hospitality, and who are ever found to be foremost in all subscriptions to charities, parochial or otherwise. This mode of attack, however, answered its purpose,—it brought moderate men to the conclusion that *something* ought to be done with respect

¹ “The whole income of the Church in Ireland has been stated by Sir Robert Peel and Sir Henry Hardinge—men who have a character to sustain, and who have access to official documents—not to exceed 450,000*l.* a year. ‘I positively declare, says Sir Robert Peel, ‘that I believe it to be under that sum.’ In Ireland are about 1400 benefices ; so that if the whole were divided equally among the 2000 clergy, each would receive about 225*l.* a year.”—*Important Facts*, p. 8.

to the Irish establishment,—it familiarized their minds with the idea of change.

The mode of attack was then a little changed, and an outcry was raised against the Irish clergy as being negligent of their duties and non-resident: but here again, upon inquiry, it was found that there is no body of clergy in all Europe more strictly resident than the clergy of Ireland, and that as to their zeal, it amounted if anything to excess, evaporating itself sometimes even in fanaticism,—a circumstance to be deplored if true, but still perfectly inconsistent with the charge of supineness and inactivity. Still the attack did its work, and being believed for a time, has left an impression on the public mind not yet worn out¹.

Of late a new and most notable method of attack has been devised. It has been discovered

¹ See, for a most triumphant refutation of the calumnies heaped upon the Irish clergy in this respect, the late Bishop of Limerick's speech in the House of Lords, June 10, 1824. That ever to be lamented prelate concludes this portion of his speech in a manner peculiarly happy, and, I may say, peculiarly his own: "The case stands thus: Irishmen know the Irish clergy *to be* at home; Englishmen know the Irish clergy *not to be* in this country. The Irish clergy are *not to be missed* in Ireland; they are *not to be found* in England. The conclusion, therefore, is obvious and irresistible; that the Irish clergy are where they ought to be; at their posts, and engaged in the performance of their sacred duties."—*Practical Theology*, ii. p. 347.

by certain politicians, who never on any other occasions have shown any great zeal for the Protestant cause, (and the discovery has been hailed by the applause of leading Papists,)—that the Church as at present established, and during the time she was in the enjoyment of ample revenues, retarded instead of advancing the progress of the reformed religion; and that to render her efficient she must be crippled in all her resources, and reduced to poverty and distress—that if there is to be a crown on her head, it must be a crown of thorns—if a sceptre in her right hand, it must be a powerless reed. Now, we might consider the absurdity of this statement to be too great to require an answer, were it not that its absurdity is absolutely increased when made with reference to the Church of Ireland; for how long has the Church of Ireland enjoyed—I will not say prosperity—but even a moderate share of the support of government? Let us look to history.

In the reign of Charles I. we find the Convocation of the Church of Ireland stating, in a petition to the King¹, that “in all the Christian world the rural Clergy have not been reduced to such extremity of contempt and beggary as in this kingdom, by the means of appropriations, commendams, and violent intrusions into their un-

¹ Among the Earl of Strafford's Letters.

doubted rights, in times of confusion—having their Churches ruined, their habitations left desolate, their glebes concealed, and, by inevitable consequence, an invincible necessity of general non-residency, whereby the ordinary subject hath been left wholly destitute of all possible means to learn true piety to God.” It had been said a few years before by Sir Henry Sidney to Queen Elizabeth, that “on the face of the earth, where Christ was professed, there was not a Church in so miserable a case.” And so it continued to be down to the middle of the last century. And what was the consequence? The advance of Protestantism? No, assuredly; but the increase of that which is at the present day the great curse of that country—of that which has *turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock*—of Popery; of Popery, which, in opposition to the Church, was maintained by Spanish and Italian gold¹, and was patronised by those factions, the leaders of which were in possession of the best part of the ecclesiastical property²—the increase,

¹ Phelan, ii. 294.

² The origin of the support which was afterwards given to Popery by the Irish aristocracy, who, together with the people and clergy, at first so quietly and happily acquiesced in the Reformation, may be seen in Phelan, p. 167—176. “From time to time,” he says, at p. 174, “Elizabeth sent instructions to her Irish government, to proceed with vigour in breaking the

I say, of Popery, until it was permitted to take that hold on the affections of the lower orders, that with them the cause of Popery, and the cause of their country, as distinguished from the rest of the empire, are now identified. And to this state of things the advocates of Popery would, of course, gladly return—and to effect this purpose they are now using all their endeavours. For *they* know full well, that if the Church of Ireland has that countenance from Government which it has a right to expect, *their* cause will be lost.

It was not, as I have stated, till the middle of the last century, that the Irish Church received

power of the nobles: deep and general discontent among them was the natural consequence, and from discontent it was, in those days, an easy transition to insurrection. Having determined to rebel, they wisely made religion their ostensible grievance: the pretext was plausible; it would strengthen their confederacy, engage the simple and superstitious in their cause, and help to conceal from all, the true sources of Irish calamity; accordingly they became the champions of religion. Formerly, when they had once resolved to obey the King, they made no scruple to renounce the Pope; knowing that, thereby, they would lower the tone of a domineering Priesthood: now, on the other hand, they had resolved to oppose the Crown, and therefore affected a zeal for the Papacy." In the hands of Irish Laymen there are 1,480 glebes once belonging to the Church, 562 impropriate rectories, and 118 parishes wholly impropriate; making in all 680 parishes. The amount derived from tithes by Laymen is said to be £300,000 a year.—See *Important Facts*, p. 4.

the support it deserved—it was not till the commencement of the present century, until the two Churches, as well as the two kingdoms, were united, that it had, if I may venture upon the expression, any thing like fair play. And of its progress since that period we possess the most satisfactory documents. For instance, at the time of the Union there were in Ireland 1000 Clergymen, there are now above 2000¹; and surely the increase of the Clergy could only have been occasioned by an increased demand for their services; especially as of these 800 are curates—again, in 1800 there were not above 300 glebe houses—there are now above 900; but the strongest fact of all is this, that whereas in the year 1800 there were only 639 Churches in all Ireland, there are now 1338, besides schools used for public worship where no Churches have been erected, to the number of 196, making in all 1,534; while, according to the Report of the Commissioners, many applications for new Churches are constantly made. It is *not* then because the Church as at present established and endowed is *inefficient*, but because it is *too* efficient, that those factions are armed against it, whose object is, if Papists, the Establishment of Popery; if *not*

¹ See *Important Facts*, pp. 6, 7. The tables are there given, which have been corrected up to the present time, from documents published in the “British Magazine.”

Papists, the advancement of infidelity, which, where Popery prevails, universally gains ground.

The latest and newest, and what to all appearance is the most decisive—as it is certainly the most cruel method of attack devised—is that which has been the cause of our coming together on the present occasion; the attempt, as it has been well described, to starve the Church out of Ireland, by withholding from the Clergy all their rights and dues; an attempt which I trust the zeal and benevolence of England will frustrate and defy¹.

¹ This endeavour to starve Protestantism out of Ireland has not the charm of novelty, as the following passage from Leland, vol. iii. p. 542, will show: “We were at a loss,” saith Archbishop King, “what the meaning of taking away corn from the Protestant farmers, house-keepers, and bakers should be, when there was no scarcity in the kingdom. But Sir Robert Parker and some others blabbed it out in the coffee-house, that they designed to *starve* one half of the Protestants, and hang the other; and that it would never be well till this were done. We were sensible that they were in earnest by the event,—for no Protestant could get a bit of bread, and hardly a drop of drink, in the whole city of Dublin. Twenty or thirty soldiers stood constantly about every bakehouse, and would not suffer a Protestant to come near them. Such representations,” continues the historian, “are sometimes derided as the fictions of an inflamed party. But, however improbable these instances of senseless tyranny may appear, they are confirmed by the undoubted traditions received from sufferers, and transmitted with every circumstance of credibility.” These things took place in

But it is not only of the attacks and manœuvres of her avowed enemies, that the Church of Ireland

the reign of James the Second. Perhaps I may be pardoned for making another quotation from the same Author. "The Protestant Clergy were, by this time, deprived for the most part of their subsistence. They could recover no dues from non-conformists—for these were, by the late Act for Liberty of Conscience, exempted from the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts. They could demand no tythes from the numerous body of Roman Catholics—while Popish Incumbents, who every day multiplied by death, cession, or absence of Protestants, exacted them from all parties. Yet, in the day of persecution, both Clergy and Laity felt an unusual fervour of devotion, and crowded to their places of worship. The Popish Government was offended, and probably alarmed, at these meetings. A proclamation was issued, confining Protestants to their respective parishes, which, in effect, excluded great numbers from public worship, as, in several parts of Ireland, two parishes or more had but one Church." Leland, vol. iii. p. 544. However absurd it may be to suppose, as those orators will persuade us, who attend rather to the pomp of words than to the truth of things, that it would be possible for the Papists to repeat in these days the atrocities practised in the reign of Queen Mary, yet it is by no means absurd to dread the repetition of such miseries as those described above; so far otherwise, the passages quoted from Leland might with very little alteration be received as descriptive of passing events—save that the Papists were then encouraged by the mistaken piety, and now by the sinful indifference, of our civil governors. However much their mode of application may vary, the principles of Popery remain the same, and those principles are, as the learned and candid Franciscan Father Walsh admits, as follows:—"That the advancement of Christ's kingdom, *i. e.* of the Papal Church,

has to complain. She suffers not less from the indifference, the carelessness, the lukewarmness—

being the great consummation of the Divine will, and the end of human existence, all particular laws of God, of nature, or of civil society must be regulated by it; that, therefore, actions otherwise criminal—such as perjury, treason, or murder, may, by a new relation to this supreme law, change their moral character: that heresy, being directly subversive of Christ's kingdom, is an infamous crime, which annihilates all rights, and is sufficient to exclude men from all civilized communion: that the Pope is the supreme authority, both in spiritual and temporal things, having the power of both swords, particularly in countries where the civil authority has lapsed by heresy: that the Clergy, being the immediate servants of the Pope, are exempt, both in person and property, from the jurisdiction of secular tribunals."—Phelan, ii. 330. That we should regard with more than ordinary suspicion a sect in which such tenets are avowed, is certainly not surprising. Nor is the expression of our fears to be silenced by any reference to the tolerant conduct of Papists in foreign parts. The lion may be gentle as the lamb, when, not tempted by hunger, he is unprovoked and unopposed. And so, where Popery is dominant, and Protestantism lukewarm, Popery may assume an aspect of meekness and benevolence,—not because its principles are changed, but because it has no occasion to act upon them. It is when Popery is aggressive, when it is contending for the mastery—as is now the case in Ireland—when its policy is to put down Protestantism, that we dread the consequence of principles which, though not always acted on, have never yet been renounced. We may admit, that the Romish Church may be as the American savage, a tender parent,—what we complain of is, that, as an enemy, she has recourse to wicked, and unlawful, and cruel modes of warfare.

to use no stronger terms—of those who profess to be her political friends. And as, perhaps, less of sympathy is felt for the Irish Clergy, and certainly more allowance made for the excesses of the Roman Priesthood in that country, from an ignorance of the relative position of the two parties, to this subject I proceed to request your attention.

Judging from the colloquial language of the day, it would seem to be the prevailing opinion, that at the time of the Reformation, an old Church was turned out, and a new Church brought in ;—that of the old Church, the Papists are the representatives, as the Protestants are the descendants of the intruders. Now this is just what the Papists desire you to concede ; for they know full well that there is always some allowance made for those who, in contending, are contending only for what was once their own. And this concession is always virtually made—so great is the force of words—whenever we give or permit them to assume the almost sacred title of Catholics. The property of the Church of Ireland, they argue, once belonged to the Catholics ; we are Catholics, and, therefore, if all men had their rights, that property would be ours. And how is this argument to be met—especially by those who deny the right of the State to seize the property which, by various private bequests, has

been given to the Church? how—but by positively denying the justice of their claim to be called the Catholics of Ireland, and by proving, as we *can* prove, and as, by God's blessing, I now intend to prove, that in appropriating that title, they are guilty of taking what does not belong to them? To prove this, we must have recourse again to history.

Of the first introduction of Christianity into Ireland, we have no authentic records, nor is it necessary to search for them—since, of the present Church, the founder, under God, was St. Patrick. From him it is that the Protestant Clergy can—and *only* they—trace their succession, and *through* him, from the Apostles themselves. That, by a regular series of consecrations and ordinations, the succession from Patrick and Palladius, and the first Irish Missionaries, was kept up until the reign of Elizabeth, our enemies will, themselves, allow¹. The question therefore is, whether that succession was at that time lost. And this we defy our adversaries to prove. It is a well-known fact, that, of all the countries of Europe, there was not one in which the process of the Reformation was carried on so regularly, so canonically, so quietly, as it was

¹ The "History of the Irish Bishops," from the time of St. Patrick, is written by Sir James Ware.

in Ireland¹. Carte, the biographer of Ormond, having observed that the Popish schism did not commence in England until the twelfth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign², but that for eleven

¹ Phelan, ii. 131. 138.—It is remarkable that the only peaceful period of Irish history was that at which the supremacy of the Pope was renounced. So universal was the tranquillity, that a considerable body of troops was spared for the King's service before Boulogne, while another force of three thousand men was sent into Scotland, to the aid of the Lord Lenox.

² "The Romish sect in England at first was governed by Jesuits and missionary priests, under the superintendence of Allan, a Roman Cardinal, who lived in Flanders, and founded the colleges at Douay and Rheims. In 1598, Mr. George Blackwall was appointed Arch-Priest of the English Romanists, and this form of ecclesiastical government prevailed amongst them till 1623, when Dr. Bishop was ordained titular Bishop of Chalcedon, and sent from Rome to govern that Society in England. Dr. Smith, the next Bishop of Chalcedon, was banished in 1629, and the Romanists were without bishops till the reign of James II." (See the History of this Sect, by Dodd.)—*Palmer*, ii. 252.

Mr. Butler, following Dodd's "Church History," says of the Roman priests in England, that "many of them conformed for a while, in hopes that the Queen would relent, and things come round again."—*Memoirs*, ii. p. 280. "He may be right," says Dr. Phelan, "in complimenting their orthodoxy at the expense of their truth: yet it is a curious circumstance, that their hypocrisy, while it deceived a vigilant and justly suspicious Protestant Government, should be disclosed by the tardy candour of their own historians." The admission, however, as it respects both England and Ireland, is most important. Romanism having at one period become extinct in these

years those who most favoured the pretensions of the Pope conformed to the reformed Catholic Church of England, remarks, "the case was much the same in Ireland, where the Bishops complied with the Reformation, and the Roman Catholics" (meaning, of course, those who *afterwards* became *Roman*, instead of remaining *Protestant Catholics*) "resorted in general to the parish churches in which the English service was used, until the *end* of Queen Elizabeth's reign." Now, mark here, it is said that the Bishops of the Church of Ireland—that is, as our adversaries will

islands, and the present sect being one which commenced at a later date, their clergy, however valid their orders, can now have no pretence to mission. The difference between order and mission is not generally understood, even among sound episcopalians. It is thus explained by Mr. Palmer:—"It is essential that the true ministers of God should be able to prove that they have not only the *power* but the *right* of performing sacred offices:—There is an evident difference between these things, as may be seen in the following cases. If a regularly ordained priest should celebrate the Eucharist in the Church of another, contrary to the will of that person and of the bishop, he would have the *power* of consecrating the Eucharist, it actually would be consecrated, but he would not have the *right* of consecrating,—or, in other words, he would not have mission for that act. If a bishop should enter the diocese of another bishop, and, contrary to his will, ordain one of his deacons to the priesthood, the intruding bishop would have the *power* but not the *right* of ordaining, he would have no mission for that act."—ii. 247.

admit, the *then* successors of St. Patrick and his suffragans, those who had the right to reform the Church—consented to the Reformation ; and that until the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and she reigned above forty-four years, there was no opposition Church in that country under the dominion of the Pope. Altar had not yet been raised against altar by the Pope and his agents, contrary to the canons of the Church universal. But our author goes further : he tells us the *origin* of the existing Popish sect. "Swarms of Jesuits," he continues, "and Priests educated in the seminaries founded by King Philip II. in Spain and the Netherlands, and by the Cardinal of Lorraine in Champagne (where, pursuant to the views of the founders, they sucked in as well the principles of rebellion, as of what *they* call Catholicity), coming over to that kingdom as full of secular as of religious views, they soon prevailed with an ignorant and credulous people to withdraw from the public service of the church¹." Here, then, we have the history of the introduction of the existing Popish sect into Ireland—we have seen before why they prospered—they being supported by foreign potentates², while the national Church was robbed of

¹ *Life of Ormond*, i. 32.

² "During the whole of the reign of James, and part of the following reign, the (Romish) priesthood of both islands were in the interest, and many of them in the pay, of the Spanish

all her rights, and unsupported by the national Government. Nor is this a mere party statement, as may be seen by reference to Leland, the historian, or even to Bishop Berrington¹, a Popish prelate in England; the fact is universally admitted to have been as it has just been narrated. So then the case stands thus:—the existing Irish clergy can trace their succession up to the Bishops of Queen Elizabeth, under whom the old Church was reformed, not a new one introduced; and the Bishops of Elizabeth's reign, by the admission of our adversaries, were the successors of St. Patrick

monarchy. The titulars of Dublin and Cashel are particularly mentioned as pensioners of Spain; the general memorial of the Irish (Roman) hierarchy in 1617, was addressed to the Spanish court; and we are told by Bishop Bovington (a Romanist) that the English Jesuits, 300 in number, were 'all of the Spanish faction.' " *Phelan*, ii. 294.

¹ *Memoirs of Gregorio Panzani—Introduction.* Mr. Palmer observes: "The Irish bishops almost unanimously consented, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, to remove the jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff. See Leland's History of Ireland, book iv. ch. i.—The consequence was, that for a length of time there were scarcely any Popish bishops in Ireland. Macgarran, titular Archbishop of Armagh, was sent over from Spain, and slain in the act of rebellion against his sovereign. In 1621, we are informed by O'Sullivan, *Hist. Cath. Ibernæ*, that there were two Popish bishops in Ireland, and two others resided in Spain. These persons were ordained in foreign countries, and could not trace their ordinations to the ancient Irish Church."—*Origines Liturgicæ*, ii. 252.

and the other first planters of the Church in Ireland; while the present Popish priests and prelates can only trace *their* succession from certain foreign Bishops who came over in the reign of James I. The clergy, therefore, of the Church of Ireland are the successors of the Apostles in that country, to whom, and to whom alone, belong both order and mission, both the power and the right to minister in sacred things: they are the Catholic clergy of that country—*Protestant Catholics*, if you will—Catholics who protest against the usurpations of the Pope of Rome, and the abominable practices of his adherents, but still the true Catholics of Ireland.

But here the adversary will object: "Admitting that you have both order and mission, still ours are the doctrines which were originally held by the Irish Church, and for the promulgation of which that Church was established and endowed." This is easily *said*, but how will it bear the historical probe? Did the founder, under God, of the Irish Church,—did St. Patrick, as the Church of Rome now does, declare that "if any man shall say"—I am quoting a Canon of the Council of Trent—"that the clergy may contract marriages, or that such marriages are valid, let him be accursed¹?" If he *had* done so, he would have been

¹ Conc. Trent. Sess. xxiv. c. 9.

guilty of little less than parricide, while bastardizing himself,—he himself being the son of a deacon, and the grandson of a priest¹,—and we know, moreover, that he could *not* have done this, from the existence of a Canon attributed perhaps incorrectly to him, but certainly of very ancient date, regulating the conduct of the wives of ecclesiastics²! Again,—did he prohibit the perusal of Scripture? Surely not; since it is stated by Fenelon, that no such prohibition existed anywhere before the twelfth century, nor do we find any Canon on the subject in the Irish code³. Did

¹ S. Patricii Confessio MS. quoted by Abp. Usher. *Religion of the Ancient Irish*, chap. v.

² Synod. Patric. Auxil. Issernin. Even in the twelfth century the Irish refused to receive an unmarried clergy, and were pronounced to be heretics on that account by Pope Adrian.—*Phelan*, ii. 55.

³ His words are worthy of note: "I think," says this illustrious prelate, "that much trouble has been taken in our times very unnecessarily to prove what is incontestible, that, in the first ages of the Church, the laity read the holy Scriptures. It is as clear as daylight, that all people read the BIBLE AND LITURGY in their native languages: that as a part of good education, children were made to read them; that in their sermons, the ministers of the Church regularly explained to their flocks whole books of the sacred volume; that the sacred text of the Scriptures was very familiar to the people; that the clergy exhorted the people to read them; that the clergy blamed the people for not reading them, and considered *the neglect of reading them* as a source of heresy and immorality." The

he introduce the worship of images? This could hardly have been the case, for he flourished about the year 431; and the very first council which gave sanction to that heresy was held in the year 787, when the clergy of Ireland united with the clergy of England in doing what they do now, in protesting against the evil and idolatrous practice¹. Once more,—did he pronounce, as is done by the modern Church of Rome, that if “any man say”—I am again quoting a Canon of the Council of Trent—“that in the holy sacrament of the eucharist there remains the substance of bread and wine, let him be accursed?” No,—for this doctrine of transubstantiation was not

venerable prelate then proceeds to justify the Roman Church, and other Churches in communion with her, for restricting the perusal of Scripture, on the grounds only of expediency. On this subject we do not now enter,—it is sufficient for us, so far as the present argument is concerned, that the concession is made in our favour of primitive practice by one so justly celebrated.—*Œuvres Spirituels de Fenelon*, 8vo, tom. iv. p. 241, quoted and translated by Charles Butler,—*Confessions of Faith*, p. 142.

¹ To avoid crowding the page with references, I will refer the reader for proof of my assertions, except when a special reference is given, to Bishop Taylor's admirable *Dissuasive against Popery*, forming Vols. X. and XI. of Heber's edition; to the third book and the Appendix of Field *on the Church*; and to Archbishop Usher's *Religion of the Ancient Irish*.

² Conc. Trent, Sess. XIII. c. 2.

dreamed of till the eighth century : in the ninth and tenth centuries it was still disputable ; and when, in the thirteenth, the Pope of Rome sought to have it recognized in an Italian Council, the doctrine was opposed by many divines, and protested against by the clergy of England and Ireland ;—and though it was afterwards embraced by many of our theologians, and by them *assumed* to be the doctrine of the Church, yet it was never sanctioned by an English or Irish synod¹. Yet further,—did *he* withhold the cup from the people, and thus virtually deprive them of a sacrament of our Lord ? This was undoubtedly not the case, for at the Council of Constance, in the fifteenth century, wherein an enactment was made to that effect, it was admitted to be a regulation not only contrary to Scripture, but also opposed to primitive tradition². Neither could he have taught the Roman doctrine of Purgatory³, for he had

¹ The gradual introduction of the doctrine of transubstantiation may be seen, in Dr. Waterland's Charge on the Sacramental Part of the Eucharist.

² Council Constant. Sess. XIII.

³ The gradual introduction of the doctrine of purgatory may be seen in the authors before referred to, and in Bishop Bull, Sermon III. The reasoning of the Council of Trent is singular : without any appeal to Scripture, it determines, that since the mass taught that that sacrifice was expiatory for the dead, *non-dum ad plenum purgatis*, the doctrine of purgatory was sufficiently settled.

been *dead* a thousand years before that doctrine was acknowledged as an article of faith by any portion of the Church. Certainly, then, the founder of the Irish Church did not introduce the more important of those doctrines by which the Church of Rome, and the churches and sects which hold communion with her, are at present distinguished from the rest of Christendom; nor could they have been introduced by any of his successors till a late period, because with respect to most of them, till a period comparatively late, they had no existence in the minds of men. We may proceed to ask, what doctrines he held which we do not now hold, or what practices did he permit that we should condemn?—provided that since his time those practices, innocent in themselves, have not been abused to the purposes of superstition. Did the primitive Catholic Christians of Ireland, while they held the Scriptures to be the sole rule of faith, receive with deference the opinion of the universal Church as their guide for the proper interpretation of Scripture? So do we; for our clergy are enjoined “not to teach any thing as a matter of faith to be religiously observed, but that which is agreeable to the Old and New Testament, and may be collected out of the same doctrine by the ancient fathers and Catholic bishops of the Church ¹.” Was deference paid to

¹ Canons of 1571.

the decisions of councils really general, of councils summoned not by the Pope but by the Emperor, and open to all the bishops of the Church in the east, as well as in the west? So do we: we admit the four first councils, the only councils that can be proved to have been really open and general, to be, together with the plain words of Scripture, the rule and measure of judging heresies¹. Did they receive the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, without the additions made by Pope Pius IV.², and the symbol of St. Athanasius? This is precisely the case with us. But the adversary thinks that he can confound us by asking whether they received our thirty-nine articles. In other words, he asks whether we can prove that they protested against certain errors and heresies, before those errors had occurred, or those heretical opinions been started. Unless they had been gifted with the spirit of prophecy, this, of course, they could not have done. But the objection is founded on a misconception as to what our articles are and profess to be. They do not profess to be a complete system of divinity, they are merely styled "Articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces, and the whole Clergy of England,

¹ 1 Elz. i.

² i. e. *Without* the peculiar, the distinguishing articles of faith appended to it by the Church of Rome.

for the avoiding of diversities of opinions and for the establishing of consent touching true religion." In short, they are nothing more than the expression of an English synod, as to certain controverted doctrines and certain general principles, without subscribing to which ecclesiastics are prohibited by the English bishops from officiating within the boundaries of their jurisdiction. That our Church is not to be identified with a reception of the thirty-nine articles is clear from this fact, that the Church of Ireland was in full communion with the Church of England during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, although it was not till the reign of Charles I. that the articles were subscribed by the clergy of the former country¹; and the same may be said of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, by which they were only adopted at the close of the last century. Thus our articles are *not* what the articles of the Council of Trent *are*, additional articles of faith,—we *do* require our teachers and preachers to pledge themselves not to preach or teach doctrines contrary to what are therein contained, but we do *not* require their adoption as the condition of communion,—we do not say, as the Papist does, with reference to the articles of faith adopted in 1545 by the Council of Trent, that without professing them, no man can

¹ 1634. Leland, vol. ii. pp. 27, 28.

be saved. But while the objection of the Papist thus falls to the ground, we may, in our turn, take an offensive attitude, and demand whether the primitive Catholics of Ireland, the predecessors of the present Protestant clergy, received the Creed of Pope Pius IV.—the distinguishing Creed at the present time of Romanism? The answer may be given at once, by reference to what has been before stated in this discourse¹.

¹ The Creed of Pope Pius IV., the distinguishing creed of the Roman Church—the enforcement of which creed has separated that Church, in fact, from the Catholic Church of Christ—was not published till the year 1564, two years after the date of our Thirty-nine Articles. In this Creed all the corrupt opinions against which we protested and legislated, are adopted as Articles of Faith. Many things may have been taught in the Church before the Reformation, which we now know to be erroneous—but they were not insisted upon as Articles of Communion, till the Council of Trent. It was then that Romanism assumed the sectarian character. The following are the Articles appended to the Nicene Creed by Pope Pius IV.—“ I most firmly admit and embrace Apostolical and Ecclesiastical traditions, and all other constitutions and observances of the same Church. I also admit the sacred Scriptures, according to the sense which the Holy Mother Church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; nor will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. I confess also that there are truly and properly seven Sacraments of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the salvation of mankind, though all are not ne-

In like manner, when it is asked whether the primitive Catholics of Ireland used one common

cessary for every one; viz. baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penances, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony, and that they confer grace; and of these baptism, confirmation, and orders cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the ceremonies of the Catholic Church received and approved in the solemn administration of all the above said Sacraments. I receive and embrace all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the Holy Council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification: I confess likewise that in the mass is offered to God, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for sin, the living and the dead; and that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, of Christ, which conversion the (Roman) Catholic Church calls transubstantiation. I confess also, that under either kind alone, whole and entire, Christ and a true Sacrament is received. I constantly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. Likewise that the saints, reigning together with Christ, are to be honoured and invoked; that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated. I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, and of the Mother of God ever Virgin, and also of the other Saints, are to be had and retained; and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them. I also affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people. I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, the

Prayer and Liturgy, we can answer in the first place, that we may be sure that whatever prayers they used, they prayed in the vulgar tongue, not only because it was the universal practice, but because so late as the thirteenth century it was decreed in a council at Rome itself, " that because in most parts within the same city and diocese, the people of divers tongues are mixed together, having under one and the same faith, divers ceremonies and rites, that the Bishops of such cities and dioceses should provide men fit, who may celebrate Divine service according to the diversity of cere-

mother and mistress of all Churches ; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Bishop, the successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles and Vicar of Jesus Christ. I also profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent ; and likewise, I also condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever condemned and anathematized by the Church. This true Catholic (Roman) faith, out of which none can be saved, which I now freely profess and truly hold, I, N, promise, vow, and swear most constantly to hold and profess the same whole and entire, with God's assistance, unto my life's end. Amen." I have transcribed this Creed of 1564 as translated by Mr. Butler, p. 9, that the reader may have before his eyes the new articles of faith and communion which the Roman Church has added to the old Creeds, that we still retain, but which were unknown to the original Catholic Churches of these islands.

monies and languages, and administer the Sacraments of the Church, instructing them both by word and example¹." Now this clearly shows that even at Rome itself, the manufactory, the storehouse, the foundry of all modern innovations, the innovation of prohibiting the use of the language understood by the people had not as yet taken place; and if not there, then we may be sure that it prevailed no where else.

We can answer, in the next place, in the words of our most distinguished Ritualist: "The English Prayer-book was not composed in a few years, or by a few men: it has descended to us with the improvements and approbation of many centuries; and they who truly feel the value and sublime elevation of our hymns and prayers, participate in the spirit of primitive devotion. The great majority of our formularies are actually translated from Latin and Greek Rituals, which have been used for the last fourteen or fifteen hundred years in the Christian Church: and there is scarcely a portion of our Prayer-book which cannot in some way be traced to ancient offices²." We may answer thirdly, that we know it as a fact that the Roman offices, (differing though they did then from what they are now,) were not adopted in Ireland till the year of our Lord 1171, and that

¹ Bishop Taylor, x. 170.

² Palmer, vol. i. Preface.

even then they could not be introduced without artifice and manœuvre¹.

Again, when it is said that, before the Reformation, the supremacy of the Church of Ireland rested with the Pope of Rome, let us see what this amounts to. In the 12th century, the Pope asserted that "Ireland, and all the islands upon which Christ the Sun of Righteousness had shone, belonged to the patrimony of St. Peter, and the Holy Roman Church². And this usurpation was acquiesced in by the ignorance of the people at large, and the wicked ambition of Henry the Second, who, in order to have a plea for invading Ireland, cared not to examine the principle which it involved. But does it follow that, because the Pope thus pretended to have what he really had not, and assumed the sovereignty not only of Ireland, but of every other island; and, because, in this usurpation, he was not immediately opposed, he ought to be our sovereign lord at the present moment? No; assuredly, when his claims were examined into, their absurdity was at once apparent, and they were considered as having been, from the beginning, null and void. And so it was in spiritual affairs, the Pope usurped authority over the Irish Church, but not, as even

¹ Archbishop Usher, chap. iv. pp. 540. 549.

² See the Letter of Adrian to Henry II. in Phelan, vol. ii. p. 51.

modern Romanists admit, without many violent struggles, and many bitter conflicts, and much strife. Until the Synod of Kells, in 1152, the Archbishops of Ireland never condescended to receive their palls from Rome; and down to the year 1315, a Popish author acknowledges that the Irish Ecclesiastics took no oath to the Pope, that *they* never applied to the See of Rome, as the Roman Bishops in that country now do, for bulls of nomination, institution, or exemptions; that they never appealed to Rome for the decision of ecclesiastical causes¹. So that the authority of the Pope over that Church, as it was at first a usurpation, so it was a usurpation gradual in its growth,—and a usurpation which the Church, in obedience to the Canon of a general council, was bound to cast off, as soon as it was enlightened as to the fact; for a Canon of the third general council, that of Ephesus, in 431, decrees, “that none of the Bishops, most beloved of God, should assume any province that is not, or was not formerly subject to him or his predecessors from the beginning; and that, if any have assumed any Church, he should be forced to restore it, that so the Canons be not transgressed, nor worldly pride be introduced under the mask of this sacred function.”

¹ Phelan, ii. p. 94.

Now from all this it is quite clear that the existing clergy of the Irish Church, whether we regard their order, their mission, or their doctrine, are the only legitimate successors of those by whom that Church was founded, and for whose support it was endowed. For my part, I am fully convinced that we might easily show (it *has* indeed been shown by the learned Dr. Field¹), that the devisers and maintainers of the Romish doctrines were, even at the period of the Reformation, only a faction, though a powerful faction, in the Church. But on this, as it is time to draw to a conclusion, I will not insist; but by a strong license of supposition, I will grant that the Irish Church, just before the Reformation, was actually as deeply immersed in error as the Church of Rome is now; that the errors then prevailing were not the mere errors of individuals, but that they had been actually sanctioned by the Church; I will grant all this, and still ask, what will the concession

¹ The title of Dr. Field's long and learned Appendix to his Third Book is as follows:—"An Appendix wherein it is clearly proved that the Latin or West Church, in which the Pope tyrannized, was, and continued, a true orthodox and protestant Church, and that the devisers and maintainers of Romish errors and superstitious abuses were only a faction in the same, when Luther (not without the applause of all good men) published his Propositions against the Profane Abuses of Papal Indulgences."

avail the *papist*? When Naaman the Syrian was cured of his leprosy, he was not, in strictness of speech, a new man—he was the same man as he had been the day before, though he who had been sick was now made whole. So, neither, was the Church of Ireland, after the Reformation, a new Church, but the old Church reformed,—the old Church restored to its primitive health and purity. The leprosy of Naaman, we are told, clave to his servant Gehazi. But surely the king of Syria would have laughed Gehazi to scorn, if he had stood before him and demanded all the honours, emoluments, and offices, of Naaman, for no other reason but because forsooth *he*, Gehazi, was now afflicted with that disease of which Naaman had been cured. — How precisely in the position of Gehazi is the Popish priesthood of Ireland placed, when for that body is claimed a right to the property of the Church, as the representatives of the original proprietors. We know them, who they are,—the successors, not of St. Patrick, but of certain Spanish and Italian prelates, who, in the reign of James I., originated, contrary to the Canons of the Church, the Romish sect; for in that country it is only a sect, since there can be but one Church, and that is the Catholic, in the same place: and all that they can pretend to *is*, (conceding as I *have* conceded what, if *not* conceded, it would be impossible to *extort*,) that they now

hold doctrines which the Church of Ireland may have held for one, two, three, at the very most four, out of the fourteen hundred years during which it has been established; while, even as a counterpoise to this, we may place the three hundred years which have elapsed between the Reformation and the present time.

And now I have done. I have pointed out to you who they are for whom your kind consideration is requested. I may add that they are confessors, (there have been even martyrs among them,) for the Truth as it is in Jesus. However some persons may be disposed to censure the Irish Clergy for having submitted, without a protest, to the extinction of ten Bishoprics by a simple act of the Civil Legislature—a usurpation almost as great as any of which the Pope has been guilty; however inclined they may be to regard their present calamities as a visitation for their supineness at that time; certain it is that they have now at last made a gallant stand, and have shown their determination to prevent the gangrene from going further. Had they acquiesced in the godless measure proposed in the last Session of Parliament, by which the doors of eight hundred Churches would have been closed, had they consented to betray the cause of their Saviour for a few pieces of silver, they who are now suffering the miseries of destitution, and the pangs of

hunger, would be in comparative affluence and comfort. By rejecting the unholy compromise, they are involved in all that heart-rending distress which you are called upon to pity and relieve.

Although they have felt an honourable reluctance to make their miseries public, although *their stroke has thus been heavier than their groaning*, yet with many of the details of their sufferings you must be already familiar. Already, I am sure, the hearts of those of the Clergy who are here present have glowed with sympathy, when they heard speak of brother Clergymen obliged to sell their libraries for bread, and to recal their children from school to place them at the plough, and while *grieving for the affliction of Joseph*, the thought must have occurred to them, that what *has* happened in Ireland *may* happen in England: already, I am sure, the family man must have sympathised with those who, with wounded spirits and disappointed hopes, have been compelled to renounce the assurances by which they had provided for the future exigences of their household, and can now look forward to nothing but beggary for their wives and little ones, if, as in a lawless land is possible, they themselves be taken before this tyranny is overpast: the man of honour must have sympathised with honourable minds, weighed down by the pressure of debts incurred for the mere necessities of life, before the inability to pay became

apparent : all who have the common feelings of humanity must have sympathised with whole families accustomed to the elegancies, the comforts, the refinements of life, now deprived of all animal food, and regarding wheaten bread as a forbidden luxury. As fellow Christians, our sympathies are yet more powerfully awakened in their behalf, by hearing with what courage and constancy, with what resignation and meekness, with what fortitude and patience, with what submissive piety, they have borne all their weariness, and painfulness, and cares, and distractions, and fears, and sorrows ; for, by this token, we know that they have found a Comforter in him who, while he sanctifies, can elevate, control, and sustain the sinking but confiding heart.

But I will not pursue the subject. I will merely remark, that, as I commenced this Discourse by alluding to the appeal which was made to the primo-primitive Christians, in behalf of their starving brethren in Judea, so I will conclude it, by reminding you how liberally that appeal was met by the Churches, especially of Antioch, Macedonia, and Corinth. And with equal generosity I feel assured that the present appeal for the Clergy of Ireland will be answered by the Churchmen of England. And I ground my confidence on the fact, that ours are the same principles by which they were influenced ; we are

justified by the same faith, we are redeemed by the same sacrifice, we are regenerated and renewed by the same blessed Spirit, we seek for grace through the same sacraments, we enjoy the same ministry, and the works by which we are preparing ourselves to join them in the Church triumphant are the fruits of the same sanctification, and derive all their value from the same atoning blood by which they are sprinkled : the qualities and circumstances being thus the same, I am justified in anticipating a result precisely similar.

THE END.